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REMARKS

Reconsideration and further examination is respectfully requested. Claims 1-6 are pending in this application. Claims 1-2 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Albanese in view of Wright. Claims 3 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Albanese in view of Wright and further in view of de Corlieu. Claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Albanese in view of Wright in view of Ramaswami. None of the claims are currently amended.

Claims 1, 5 and 6 distinguish the cited combinations because a tunable filter is used to modulate reflection of the light signal from the central office to transmit a signal back to the central office. At the bottom of page 5 of the Office Action the Office concedes that the combination of Albanese in view of Wright in view of de Corlieu does not disclose the tunable filter being selectively tuned to a wavelength different than the wavelength of the central office's CW laser. However, the Office suggests that de Corlieu implicitly teaches the feature since a Fabry-Perot filter is used. Applicant respectfully disagrees. The tunable filter recited in claims 1, 5 and 6 not only filters the incoming light, but also selectively reflects the light from the CW laser to transmit a signal back to the central office. Hence, claim 1 distinguishes the cited combinations by reciting "said tunable filter being placed between the downstream station's RX unit and said central office to selectively reflect a signal received from the CW laser on the bi-directional fiber back to the central office." Similarly, claim 5 distinguishes the cited combination by reciting "said tunable filter being placed between the downstream station's means for receiving a light signal and said central office, the tunable filter for selectively reflecting a signal received from the central office on the bi-directional fiber back to the central office on the bi-directional fiber." Similarly, claim 6 distinguishes the cited combinations by reciting "so that the station's tunable filter will

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selectively reflect light received from the CW laser on the bi-directional fiber back to the central office on the bi-directional fiber, with said tunable filter being selectively tuned so as to modulate the light being reflected back to the central office, whereby to effectively create an upstream transmission from the downstream station to the central office." Withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1, 5 and 6 is therefore requested.

Claims 2-4 are dependent upon claim 1, and recite further distinguishing features. Claims 2-4 are also allowable for the same reasons stated above with regard to claim 1, and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 2-4 is also respectfully requested.

A corrected drawing is submitted herewith in accordance with the requirement stated in the office action.

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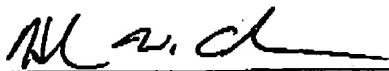
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Applicants have made a diligent effort to place the claims in condition for allowance. However, should there remain unresolved issues that require adverse action, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone Holmes W. Anderson, Applicants' Attorney at 978-264-4001 so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

For these reasons, and in view of the above amendments, this application is now considered to be in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nov. 1, 2004
Date


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Docket No. 120-389
Dd: 11/03/2004